



TGAnet: A better way to handle over-the-counter deposit reporting

By Brian Hollis

A tourist buying an annual pass to Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, an inventor filing a patent with the Patent and Trademark Office, and an importer paying a duty at a port of entry all unknowingly helped the **Financial Management Service (FMS)** launch the new Treasury General Account Reporting (TGAnet) system.

The money that the tourist, inventor and importer paid to the federal agencies was over-the-counter (OTC) revenue. OTC revenue is received from hundreds of agency sites, is deposited in over 400 financial locations nationwide, and represents more than 500,000 deposits annually. Those deposits total approximately \$50 billion per year. Before TGAnet, agencies deposited and reported these funds to the U.S. **Department of the Treasury** via a paper-driven process embodied by the multipart SF215. (For a complete description of the SF215 process, see the July 2004 Financial Connection at <http://fms.treas.gov/finconn/fc04jul.html>). With the advent of TGAnet, FMS unveils its

streamlined business process for OTC deposit reporting, which yields benefits for all the stakeholders: agencies, financial institutions and FMS itself.

TGAnet's successful launch on March 30 was the culmination of a concerted effort by FMS to streamline OTC collections for all federal agencies. TGAnet simplifies the

deposit reporting process by eliminating several transits of paper documents and the repetitive keying of data into multiple systems. For example, TGAnet will allow agencies to refresh their accounting systems electronically, saving the time of key-entering data into that system.

Stakeholder Benefits

Federal agencies benefit from TGAnet because they will receive more granular accounting information for OTC deposits at the time of deposit. At the end of the business day, an agency will have an accurate snapshot of its OTC collections across the country for that day instead of waiting until the end of the month to reconcile with Treasury. Moving away from the end-of-the-

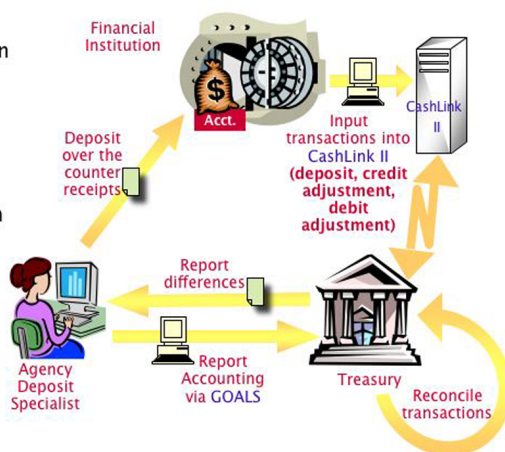
COLLECTIONS



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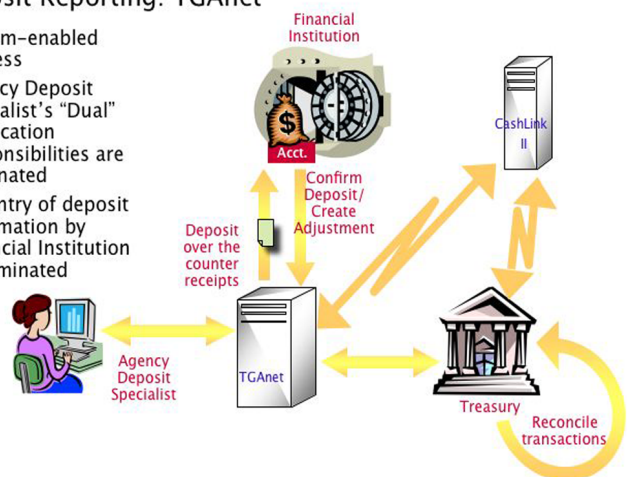
Deposit Reporting: Manual 215 Process

- Manual process
- "Dual" notification responsibilities required of Agency Deposit Specialist
- Re-entry of deposit information when confirmed by the Financial Institution



Deposit Reporting: TGAnet

- System-enabled process
- Agency Deposit Specialist's "Dual" notification responsibilities are eliminated
- Re-entry of deposit information by Financial Institution is eliminated





month SF224 reconciliation reporting will provide the agencies with significant time and effort savings.

Additionally, since TGAnet captures both the financial and accounting information when federal agencies enter their deposit reports, financial institutions (FIs) will no longer need to key the accounting information into CASHLINK II. Instead, TGAnet will

At the end of the business day, an agency will have an accurate snapshot of its OTC collections across the country for that day instead of waiting until the end of month to reconcile with Treasury.

transmit this information to CASHLINK II via an XML interface. This electronic file transmission will eliminate redundant data entry by the agency and the FI and also will reduce the opportunity for costly data entry mistakes.

TGAnet benefits FMS by facilitating enterprise architecture and governmentwide accounting (GWA) implementation. FMS will gain near real-time reporting of agency collections to the GWA system, a large step toward eliminating end-of-month reconciliations through SF224 and similar processes. FMS will realize a significant reduction in costs associated with the printing, distribution, and storage of paper forms involved in the legacy process as well as a reduction in costs associated with researching and correcting data entry mistakes.

Next Steps

FMS, working with its development partner, the **Federal Reserve Bank (FRB)** of St. Louis, will roll out TGAnet to the **National Park Service; Patent and Trademark Office;** and the **Customs and Border Protection, Citizenship and Immigration Services** and **Immigration and Customs Enforcement** components of the **Department of Homeland Security**. FMS will begin converting more agencies by the end of the calendar year.

Later this month, FMS will host a meeting with federal agencies and several financial institutions to discuss enhancements to TGAnet. Among the enhancements to be discussed are additional system-to-system interfaces to further automate the creation and confirmation of TGAnet deposit reports and adjustments, features to let agencies further customize their TGAnet screens, and plans for the implementation's next phase.

Agencies interested in TGAnet should mark their calendars now for the FMS annual Financial Management Conference in August (see page 3), where representatives from FMS's OTC Revenue Collection Division will deliver a presentation on the progress and implementation of TGAnet governmentwide.

For more information, contact Brian Hollis, TGAnet Development Lead, at (202) 874-6786 or brian.hollis@fms.treas.gov, or Don Clark, Project Manager, at (202) 874-7092 or don.clark@fms.treas.gov.

HOT APPLICATION:

CASHLINK II

By Tamara Whitaker

1. What is CASHLINK II?

CASHLINK II is an Internet-based java application that:

- a. receives deposit information, initiates fund transfers, and concentrates daily deposits made through multiple collection mechanisms into the U.S.

Department of the Treasury's account at the **Federal Reserve Bank** of New York;

- b. provides federal agencies with information to verify deposits and ACH and Fedwire transfers as well as adjustment information used to reconcile their accounts; and

- c. assists the Treasury in managing depository services provided by financial institutions and monitoring the cash position of the U.S. government.

2. What is new with CASHLINK II?

The most recent improvements to CASHLINK II are improved user schedules and system-to-system download functionality.

3. How do I find out more?

Visit www.fms.treas.gov/cashlink.

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Publisher: Carolyn Dunston

Editor: Melanie Rigney

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Department of the Treasury
Financial Management Service 

Find "New Horizons" at the FMS Financial Management Conference

By Angela Romano and
the Professional Development Division



New Horizons for Financial Accountability and Management is the theme for the 15th Annual Financial Management Conference Aug. 9-11 at the Hyatt Regency in Bethesda, Md. The conference is coordinated by **Financial Management Service's** (FMS) Treasury Agency Services (TAS).

The implementation and operations of federal financial systems are increasingly complex. This year's theme will address the important role that financial managers play in meeting the federal government's standards and challenges.

The conference will offer more than 75 sessions by experts governmentwide on topics such as:

- accounting
- e-commerce
- reporting and auditing
- budget
- financial systems
- information technology
- legislative issues
- career development

Other conference highlights will include special plenary sessions with prominent speakers as well as government financial management corporate presentations, exhibits, and demonstrations.

Financial personnel and vendors who would like to make a presentation, suggest topics, exhibit or demonstrate financial products at the conference should call Angela Romano at (202) 874-9584 or contact her via e-mail at angela.romano@fms.treas.gov. A complete call for presentations package will be available at www.fms.treas.gov/tas.

As was the case last year, this top-rated conference is expected to sell out. Register before June 1 to take advantage of the \$750 early bird registration rates.

For more information, call the Professional Development Division at (202) 874-9560 or visit www.fms.treas.gov/tas.

At the 2004 Financial Management Conference, Fiscal Assistant Secretary Donald Hammond (above) spoke about the challenges facing government financial professionals; FMS Deputy Commissioner Ken Papaj (below, far right) moderated a panel featuring assistant commissioners (from left) Kerry Lanham, Jim Sturgill, Martin Mills, Gary Grippo, Nancy Fleetwood, Wanda Rogers and Judy Tillman.



Linda Springer, the former Office of Management and Budget (OMB) controller who has been nominated to head the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), was among the speakers at the 2004 conference.



FMS experts share knowledge at NACHA's Payments 2005

About 2,500 people learned about the latest advances in electronic payments at Payments 2005, hosted by NACHA - The Electronic Payments Association. The annual conference was held April 10-13 in San Antonio, Texas.

More than 140 sessions in five tracks covered issues such risk management, international transactions, identity theft and fraud, and emerging technologies.

For more on the conference or to learn about Payments 2006 in San Diego, Calif., visit www.nacha.org.



(Above) Strategies for moving benefit recipients from checks to direct deposit were discussed by Kathy Paese (l.), vice president of the Federal Reserve Bank (FRB) of St. Louis's Treasury Relations and Support Office, and Sally Phillips, director of the Financial Management Service's (FMS) Electronic Funds Transfer Strategy Division.



(Above) FMS's booth in the exhibit hall drew traffic with information about collection and payment tools. The Austin Financial Center (AFC), including Program Analysts Joan Harper (far l.) and Tabitha Guyton (far r.), hosted the booth.

(Below) FMS International Payments Specialist Michele Heine (middle) explains the Treasury perspective during an international Automated Clearing House panel that included (l.) JoAnne Mellinger, vice president of operations at the Bank of Belton, Belton, Mo., and Elizabeth McQuerry, assistant vice president, FRB Atlanta.



Changes ahead for check aftermath process

By Cynthia Truesdale-Hale and Ann Putney

Approximately 100 federal program agency (FPA) representatives attended the annual **Financial Management Service (FMS) Check Claims** meeting in Hyattsville, Md., April 6-7. The meeting provided an opportunity for the Check Claims Branch (CCB) and customer agencies to collaborate on solutions to complications that arise during the check aftermath process.

Agency representatives participated in discussions on topics including the new Treasury Check Information System (TCIS), Intra-governmental Payment and Collection System (IPAC), Questioned Documents, and Secure Payments System (SPS).

During the meeting, three agency representatives were presented with the Check Claims Agency Liaison Award for their outstanding service and commitment to CCB's efforts to improve the check claims process. The recipients were: Andre Hall, **Office of Personnel Management (OPM)**; Janet McMullin, **Internal Revenue Service (IRS)**; and Cheryl Adams, **Social Security Administration (SSA)**.

Participants were informed of the latest developments and implementation schedule for the much-anticipated TCIS, which will replace the Check Payment & Reconciliation (CP&R) System. TCIS, which is being developed by the **Federal Reserve Bank** of Philadelphia, is a Web-based application that will per-

form aftermath activities for all U.S. Treasury checks. A demonstration showed how the Integrated View, an interface used to provide a single interface to TCIS, lets users view payment and claims information for check and Automated Clearing House payments.

Members of the IPAC staff are forging ahead with implementation of IPAC changes, scheduled to begin in mid-2005. IPAC is one of the major components of the Government On-Line Accounting Link System (GOALS). IPAC's primary purpose is to provide a standardized interagency fund transfer mechanism.

The Questioned Documents Branch, which identifies alteration, additions or deletions to U.S. Treasury documents and identifies persons through authorship of handwriting exemplars, explained the security features of a genuine Treasury check. The presentation included examples of altered and counterfeit checks.

A session on SPS emphasized the commitment to improving the process utilized by FPAs for certifying payment requests sent to FMS Regional Financial Centers. SPS is a full replacement system for the current Electronic Certification System (ECS) and retains all existing ECS functionality with additional enhancements.

For information about participating in future meetings, please contact the Check Claims Branch Customer Liaison Specialists at (202) 874-8445 or visit www.fms.treas.gov/checkclaims.

MEETINGS AND FORUMS

Forum showcases payment, collection tools

By Rhonda Lambert and Sandra Young

More than 35 representatives of eight federal agencies attended the San Francisco Financial Center (SFC) Customer Assistance Staff's (CAS) Electronic Payments and Collections Agency Forum on March 30-31.

The forum gave the agencies an opportunity to learn about the **Financial Management Service's (FMS)** electronic products and services that are available to help agencies meet their electronic payment and collection goals. This was the first agency forum at SFC's new facility in Emeryville, Calif.

FMS experts presented information on the Secure Payment System (SPS); the Internet Payment Platform (IPP); International Treasury Services (ITS.gov); the Governmentwide Accounting (GWA) Modernization Project; Payments Accounting Claims Enhancements Reconciliation (PACER); the Automated Clearing House (ACH); the Treasury Offset Program (TOP); Pay.gov;

CASHLINK II; Over-the-Counter Paper Check Conversion (OTC PCC); Electronic Check Processing (ECP); Treasury General Account Deposit Reporting Network (TGAnet); and the Treasury Check Information System (TCIS).

Agencies represented included the **Denali Commission; Social Security Administration (SSA); U.S. Mint; and the Departments of Labor, Transportation, Health and Human Services, Veterans Affairs and Interior.**

To learn the dates for upcoming agency forums, please see www.fms.treas.gov/calendar.html.



Regional Director Phil Belisle welcomes participants to the forum and to the San Francisco Financial Center's (SFC) new facility.

Check it out: Electronic Check Processing

By Norina Carpinteyro

The **Financial Management Service's** new Electronic Check Processing (ECP) system clears checks using both Automated Clearing House (ACH) electronic debits and check truncation. Check truncation is formally known as the Check Clearing for the 21st Century Act or is simply referred to as Check 21.

Check 21 is the process of taking the electronic image of a check and electronically sending that data for settlement. Truncation under Check 21 does not electronically convert that check into an ACH debit as conversion does. The new Check 21 law that supports truncation simply accelerates the settlement process through the use of digital images.

ECP makes a decision on each check whether to truncate and image the check or create an ACH debit. Most consumer checks will be converted to ACH debits, while most corporate checks will be truncated. Either process is much more efficient than current check clearing capabilities and is seamless to the agency. ECP's goal is to give agencies more control over their check transactions, facilitate accounting, and provide a single portal

for researching items and remittance information.

The first cashflow to be implemented on the ECP platform was the **Internal Revenue Service's** Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC). Just four months after Check 21 went into effect in October 2004, FMS was ready to leverage its existing infrastructure to include the truncation of checks when a certain item could not be converted to an electronic funds transfer.

On March 15, ECP processed 1,618 items totaling \$390,014.44 on behalf of the HCTC program. Forty-six items were truncated and processed via Check 21; the rest were converted into ACH debits. The HCTC program expects to process approximately 150,000 items annually. FMS will continue to roll out ECP at all lockbox processors, and plans to migrate over 200 cashflows in 2005.

ECP vastly improves the federal government's processing of checks by eliminating the need to physically transport the items from the bank where the check was deposited to the payer bank for settlement. This process reduces the float time and has significant cost savings to the government.

For more information, please contact Norina Carpinteyro at (202) 874-6599.

COLLECTIONS

UPCOMING EVENTS

For more information about FMS events, please see www.fms.treas.gov/calendar.html.

May 16-18: Annual Debt Collection Conference, Arlington, Va.

May 24: Treasury Report on Receivables Workshop, Washington, D.C.

May 24-25: Training for FedDebt Implementation, Chicago, Ill., and Washington, D.C.

June 1-2: Training for FedDebt Implementation, Oakland, Calif.

June 2: Training for FedDebt Implementation, Hyattsville, Md.

June 7-8: Training for FedDebt Implementation, Atlanta, Ga., and Washington, D.C.

June 9: US Debit Card Agency Forum, Washington, D.C.

June 14-16: TROR Workshop, Austin, Texas.

June 15-16: San Francisco Financial Center (SFC) Customer Advisory Board Meeting, Emeryville, Calif.

June 15-16: Kansas City Financial Center (KFC) Customer Advisory Board Meeting, Minneapolis, Minn.

June 15-16: Automated Standard Payment Application (ASAP.gov) Federal Program Agency User Group Meeting, Baltimore, Md.

